



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FORMER EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER OF THE
CORRECTION OFFICERS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION
FOUND GUILTY IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT FOR
FILING A FALSE LIFE INSURANCE CLAIM**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and ROSE GILL HEARN, the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced that ALLEN BLAKE, a former member of the executive board of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association ("COBA"), was found guilty yesterday, following a jury trial before United States District Judge ROBERT P. PATTERSON, of committing mail fraud by submitting a false life insurance claim. In addition, the jury found ALLEN BLAKE's co-defendant CHANDRA LaSONDE, 44, of Middletown, New York, not guilty on the charge against her.

According to the Indictment and the evidence presented during the three-day trial:

On October 23, 2009, ALLEN BLAKE submitted a dependent life insurance claim form to the Prudential Insurance Company of America, by which BLAKE sought to collect a \$10,000 life insurance benefit following the death of PEARL BLAKE. The claim falsely identified ALLEN BLAKE as being married to PEARL BLAKE, the dependent. However, in truth and in fact, ALLEN BLAKE divorced PEARL BLAKE on July 7, 2009, several months before her death and several months before ALLEN BLAKE filed the false claim. ALLEN BLAKE was notified that the judgment of divorce had been signed and filed in July 2009.

On November 10, 2009, ALLEN BLAKE received proceeds from his fraudulent life insurance claim totaling approximately

\$10,000. Later that month, other members of the COBA executive board discovered that ALLEN BLAKE had submitted a false claim. Subsequently, ALLEN BLAKE admitted to several COBA board members that he had "f---ed up." ALLEN BLAKE resigned from COBA's executive board on November 20, 2009.

ALLEN BLAKE, 53, of Hempstead, New York, faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. He is scheduled to be sentenced on September 15, 2010, by Judge PATTERSON.

Mr. BHARARA praised the work of DOI in this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney SANTOSH ARAVIND is in charge of the prosecution.

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